

***Differences and similarities
between individuals
in ongoing grammaticalisation***

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Grammaticalisation: regular or erratic?

- Regularity:
 - Across languages: Heine & Kuteva 2002
 - Within languages: Van Gelderen 2011
- Variability:
 - Co-determined by structural environment (Mithun 1991:160; Fischer 1997:265; 2007, ch.4; Hilpert 2008; Verstraete 2008; De Vogelaer 2010; Coleman & De Clerck 2011; Ghesquière & Van de Velde 2011; De Smet & Van de Velde 2013; Petré 2014, among many others).
 - Individual differences?

Individual vs. aggregate level

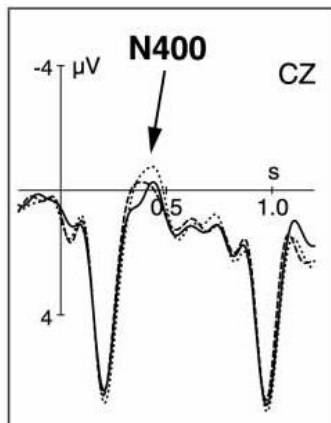
"Unfortunately, of course, how to define language change remains a controversial issue. The basic division is between two schools of thought. On the one hand there are those who, following Chomsky and earlier writers such as Paul (1880), view the competence of the individual speaker (I language) as the primary object of study in linguistics. On the other hand there are those who stress the social dimension of language and focus their research on the "orderly heterogeneity" (Weinreich, Labov and Herzog 1968: 100) of usage by different social groups within a speech community. The latter school naturally views language change as minimally a change common to all members of a particular subgroup of a speech community – anything less is merely individual variation, not change." (Lucas 2014)

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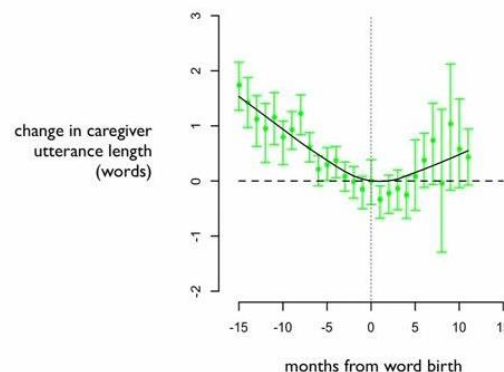
short time span

long time span

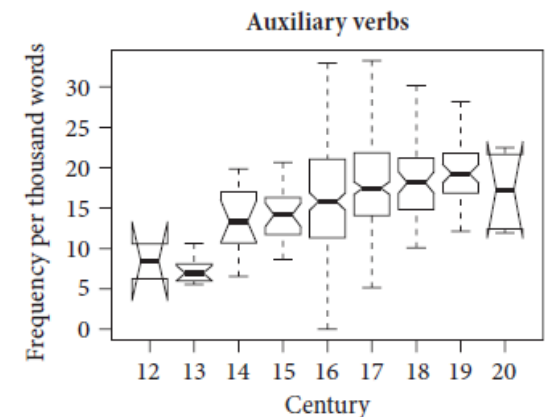


(From: Wang et al. 2009)

Evidence for Finely Tuned Child-Caregiver Feedback Loops



(From: Roy 2011)



(From: Szmrecszanyi 2012)

Previous work on individual differences

- Research on individual differences in
 - language attainment experiments (see Dąbrowska 2012)
 - Synchronic corpus studies (Barlow 2013)
 - Historical corpus studies (Nevalainen et al. 2011; De Smet, ms.)
 - Diachronic (longitudinal) corpus studies (Bergs 2005; Raumolin-Brunberg 2009; Hendriks 2013)
- What is lacking?
 - Diachronic (longitudinal) LARGE-SCALE corpus studies

Be going to · grammaticalization

- [I am going] [to buy some chocolate] > [I am going to buy some chocolate]
- Source construction: [[*go*][allative motion]] + [[*be Ving*][imperfectivity/on-goingness]] + [[*to* Inf][purpose adjunct]]

(1) *I **am goyng** to the Pope, **to praie** him to place me in mariage.* (1566, *The palace of pleasure beautified* ... [EEBOCorp 1.0])

- Previous work by Hilpert (2008), Traugott (2011, 2012), Traugott & Trousdale (2013), Disney (2009, ms.), Petré (2013a).

Methodology

- Corpus description
 - EEBOCorp 1.0 (Petré 2013b)
 - EEBO-database (eebo.chadwyck.com): English books printed 1473-1700.
 - Selection criteria:
 1. Sufficient material for first and second halves of writer's careers
 2. Constant register over time
 3. Writers are from roughly the same social status.
 - Resulting corpus: 50 million+ tokens, with individual author token counts ranging between *ca.* 300,000 and 14,000,000 words
 - Perl scripts for retrieving all instances of *going* (n = 10,000+), including variants
 - After semi-manual filtering a total of 1024 instances of *be going to* + INF remained

Methodology

- Coding of formal + semantic features
 - commonly associated with the grammaticalisation of *be going to*.
 - are given a score.
 - summatively, provide an overall score for the level of grammaticalisation reached in a particular individual (the dependent variable in our inquiry).

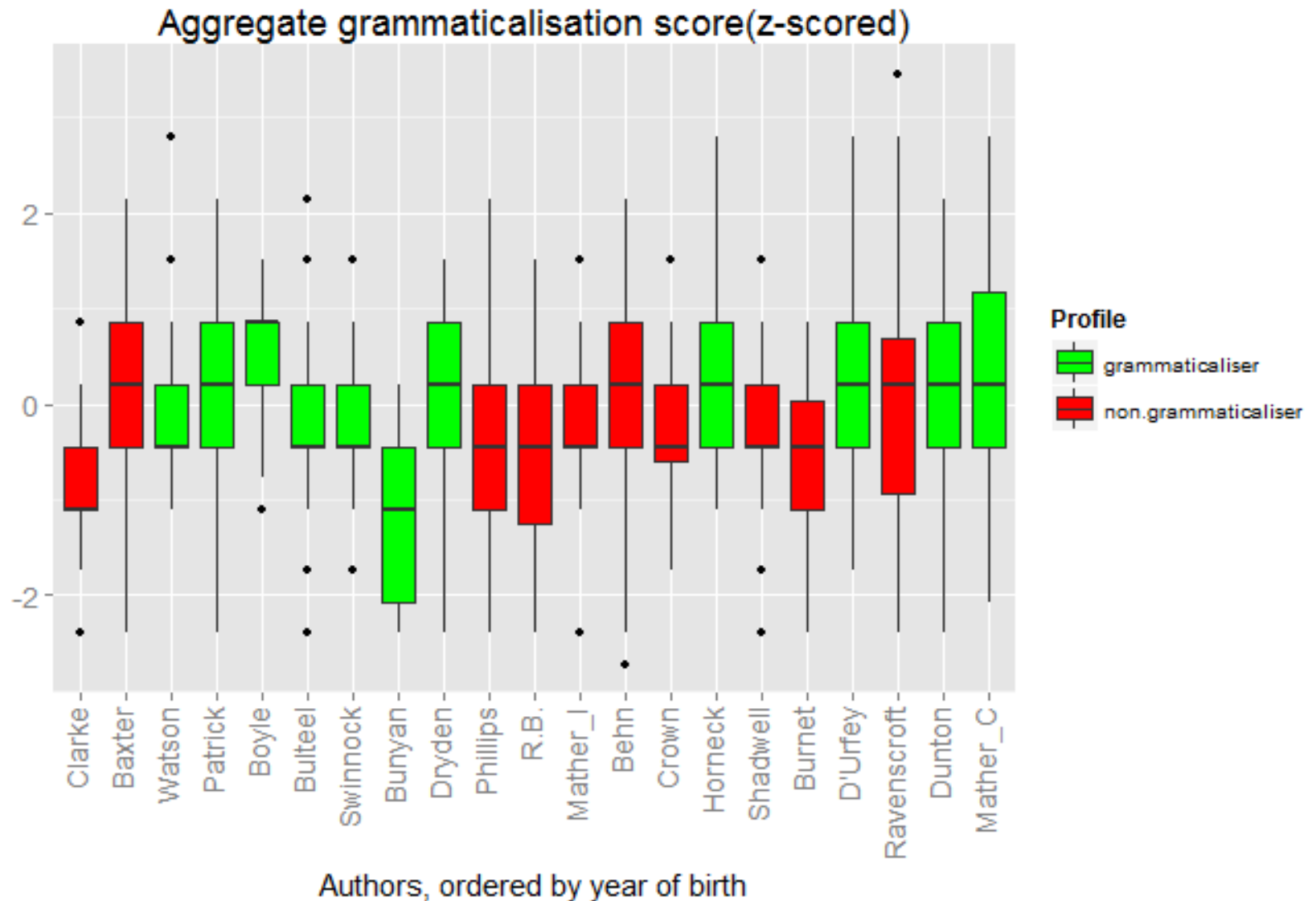
Methodology

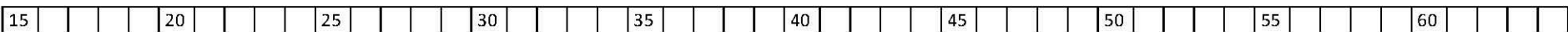
- Data coding and analysis
 1. 'adjacency', i.e. the linear contiguity of *go* and the *to*-inf part
He's going (now) to see some fresher beauties.
 2. 'structural' features ('fronting', 'parenthetical use', 'coordination' with existing aspectual auxiliaries)
that barbarous action he was going to commit.
 3. 'goal', i.e. the presence or absence of a goal
Sir, I am just now going to a Lawyer (to aske his Councell).
 4. 'voice', i.e. whether *go* is followed by a passive *to*-inf
Are not you going to be married?
 5. 'motion', i.e. can *going* be interpreted as expressing spatial motion?
Count de Saluces was going to be her lover.
 6. 'animacy', i.e. whether the subject is animate or not.
Examples which are now going to be Familiar to me.
 7. 'predictiveness', i.e. is a prediction about absolute future involved.
little before the Second Coming ... the Devil is going to be Dislodged of the Air, where his present Quarters are; God will ... cause him to fall.

Methodology

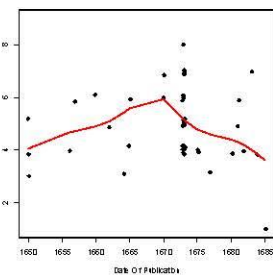
- Data coding and analysis
 - For each of the authors, we divided the collected data in half, to arrive at two categories 'earlier work' and 'later work', in order to check whether differences occurred through the years.

Proportionally not more instances of high grammaticalizations later in life

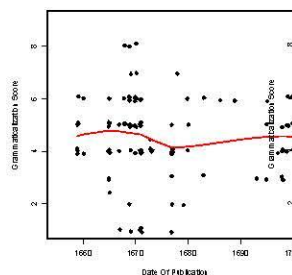




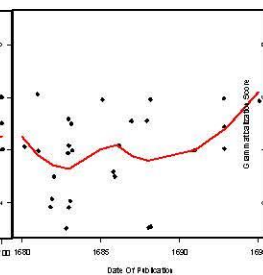
1615, Richard Baxter (n=138)



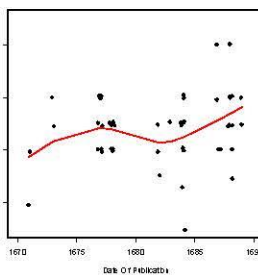
1626, Simon Patrick (n=115)



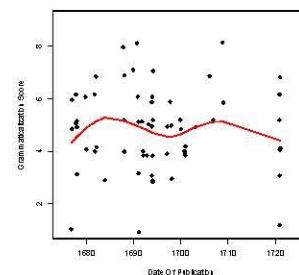
1632, George Nathaniel (n=28)



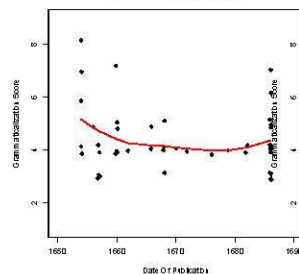
1640, Aphra Behn (n=52)



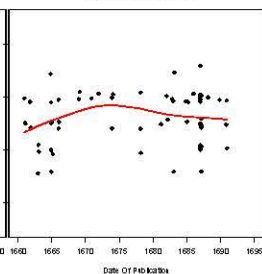
1659, Thomas D'Urfey (n=62)



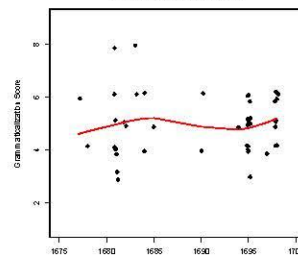
1620, Thomas Watson (n=47)



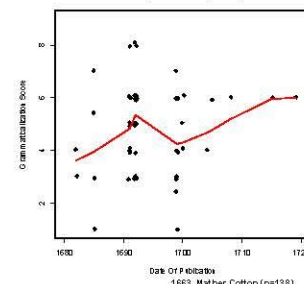
1627, Robert Boyle (n=47)



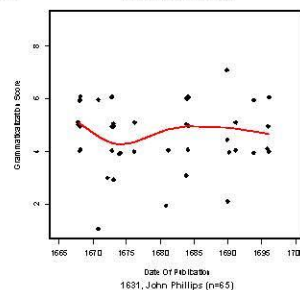
1641, Anthony Horneck (n=47)



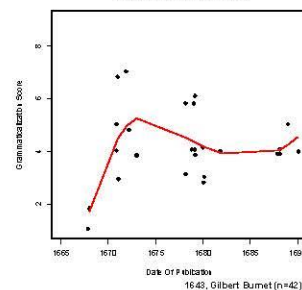
1659, John Dunton (n=52)



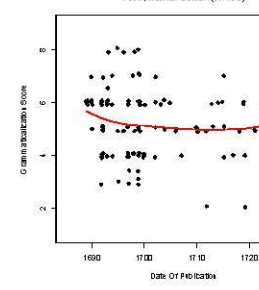
1631, John Dryden (n=46)



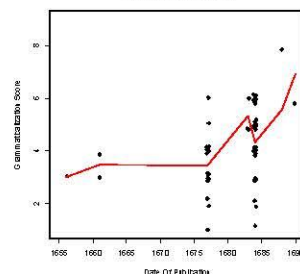
1642, Thomas Shadwell (n=26)



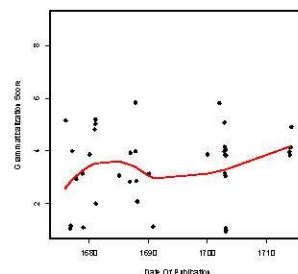
1669, Mather Cotton (n=138)



1631, John Phillips (n=65)



1643, Gilbert Burnet (n=42)



Grammaticalization is like legos

- Diachronically people have shifted from wooden bricks to lego bricks



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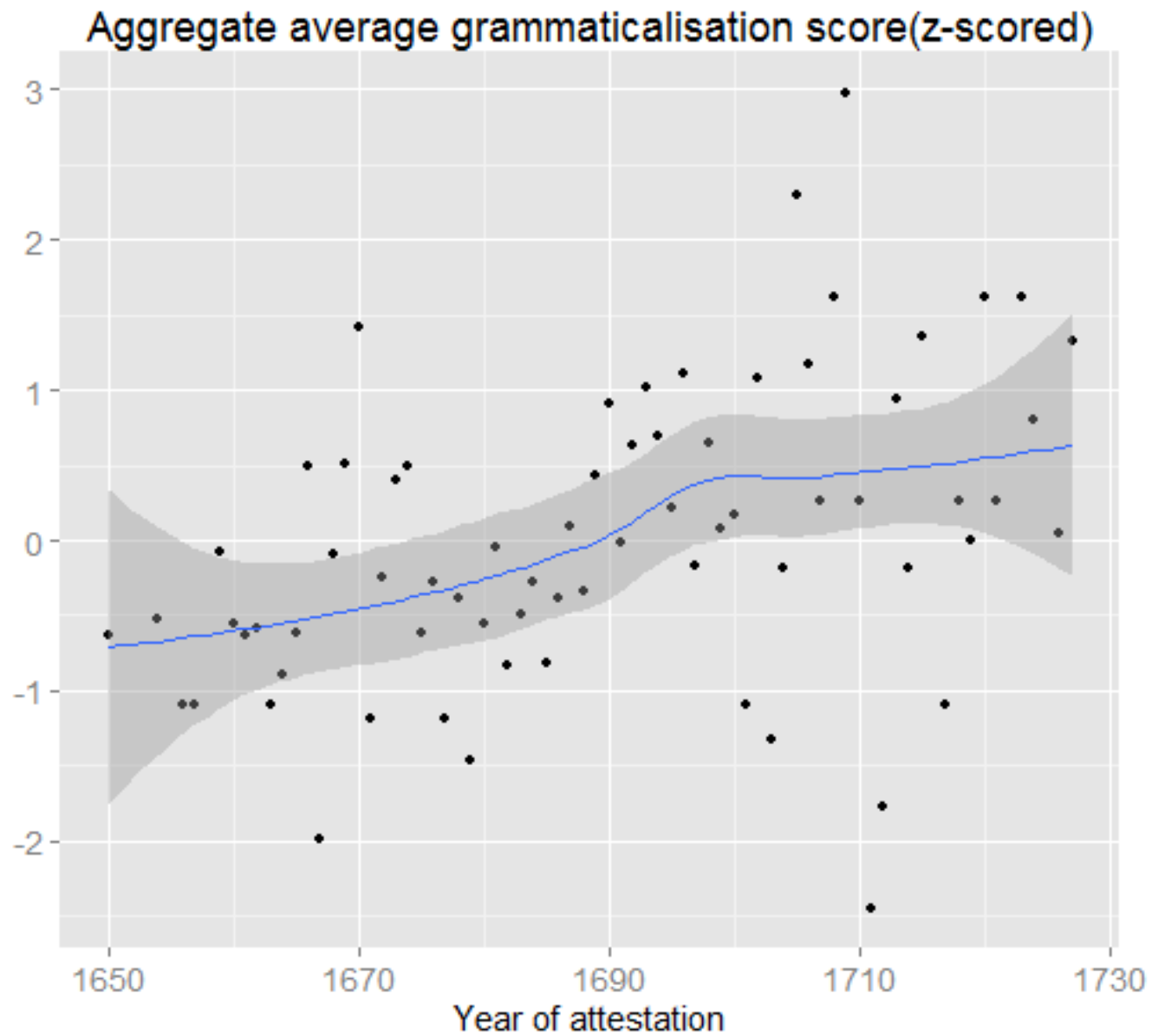
- Like replacing one construction by another one (e.g. *be about to* INF > *be going to* INF)

Grammaticalization is like legos

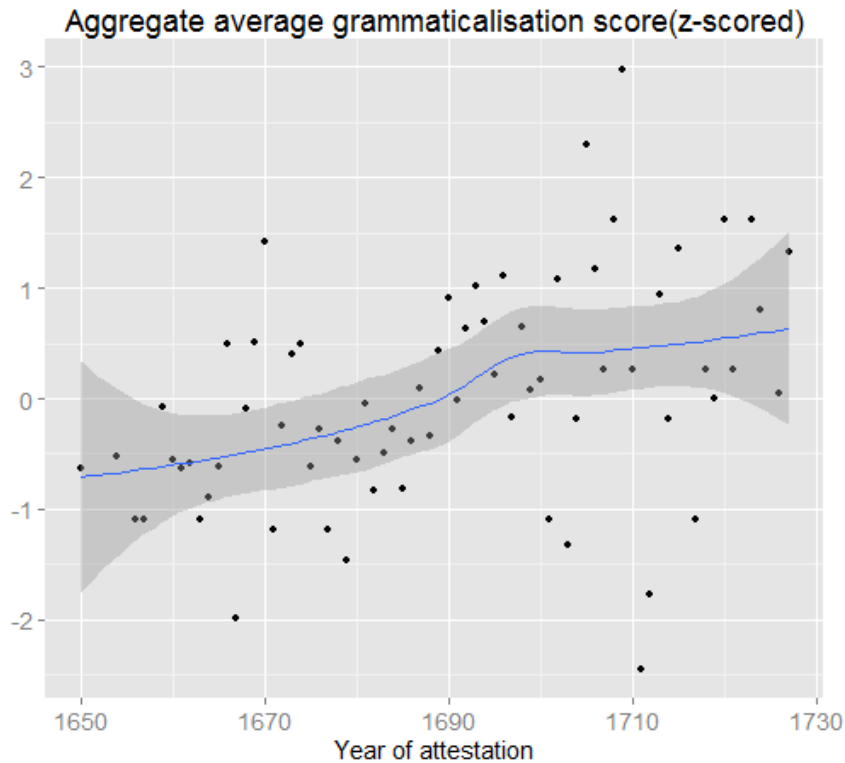
- Items with many grammaticalization features
 - *I shall then know if my friendship be inconsistent with **the love my heart is going to be possest with**.* (Ravenscroft, 1677)

are like **bigger**
lego sets

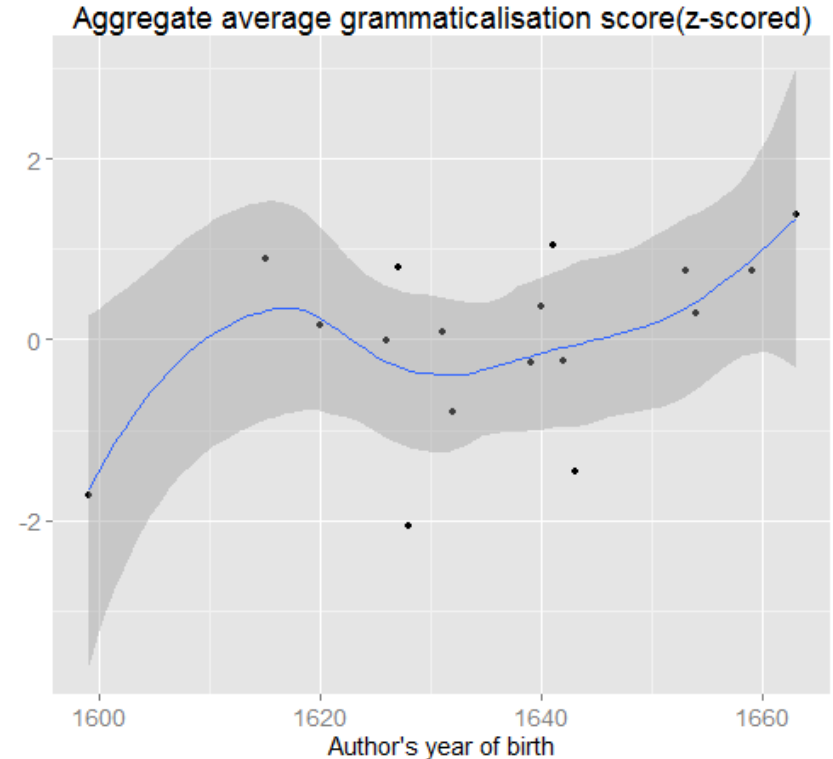




Higher consistency in individuals



With loess regression line
(Pearson correlation: 0,41, $p < 0.001$)



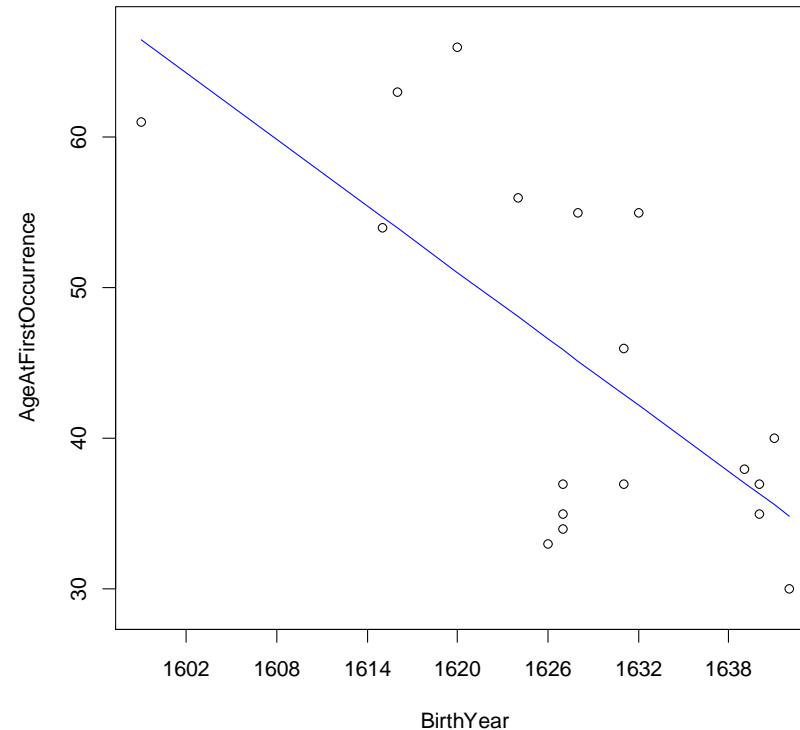
With loess regression line
(Pearson correlation: 0,46, $p = 0.06$)

Yet older generations too buy legos once and again

- 1660 · Fronting

(2) *What I am going (??to church) to say is this*

⇒ Everybody adopts the innovation shortly after it spread



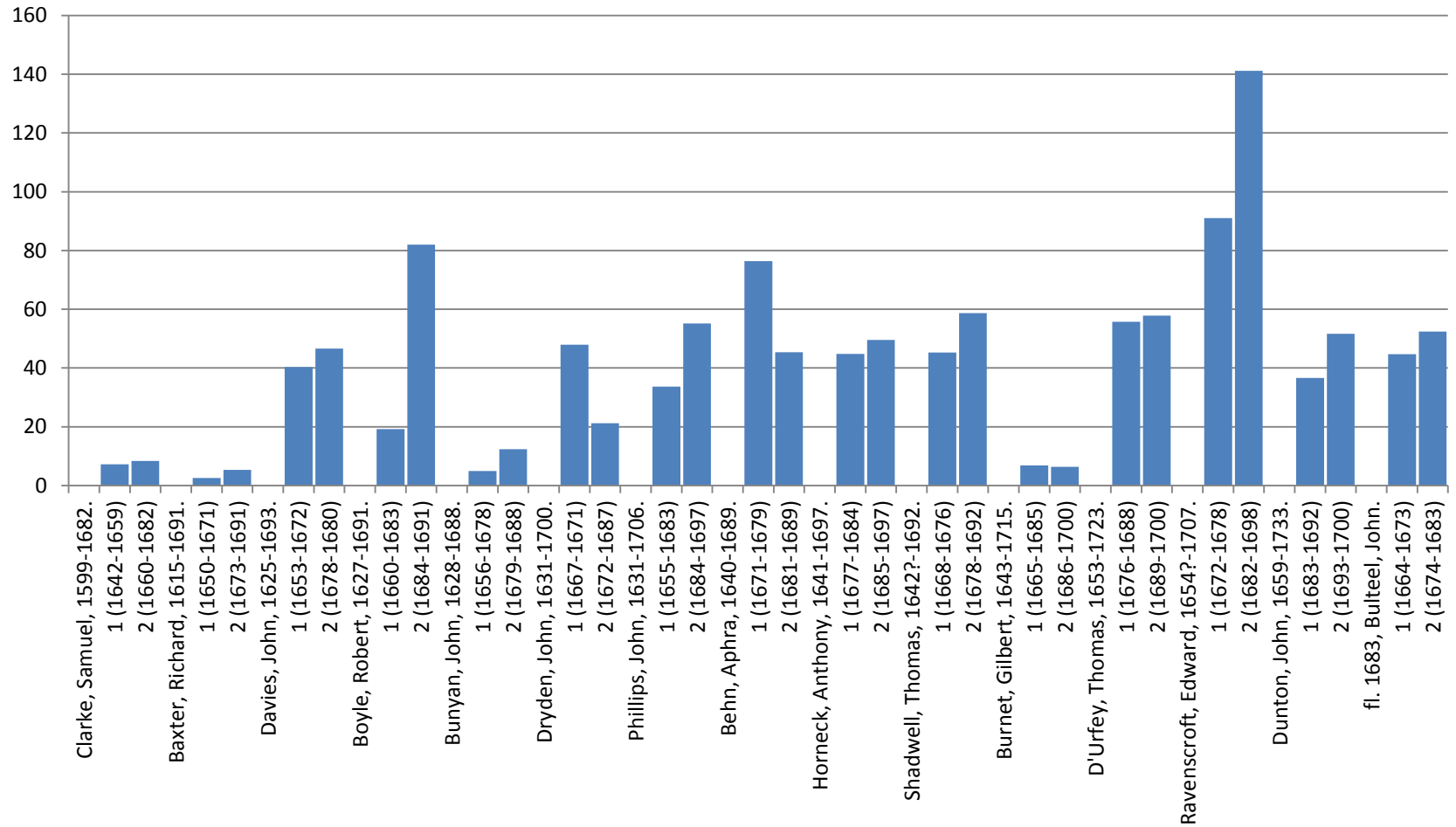
$R^2 = 0,46$ – t-test = $p < 0.001$ (n=22)

Solution to the lego-puzzle

- It is not because people buy legos instead of traditional bricks, that they will buy increasingly bigger sets through their lifetimes
- Taking part in the Lego trend, they do buy more lego sets, **both** small and big ones
 - *O, my dear, I was just going to pay my devoirs to you.* (Dryden, 1673)



Everybody uses [be going to INF] more



Conclusions

- Detailed analysis can go beyond a blunt distinction between *be going* 'moving' vs. grammatical *be going to* INF
- Significant change can be perceived
 - calculating aggregate feature scores
 - within the grammaticalized instances of *be going to* INF
 - even within a time span of a mere 75 years
 - even within a small set of individuals

Conclusions

- The analysis also suggests
 - that individuals do change throughout their adult lifetimes
- Work in progress
 - are individuals more conservative than communal grammar?
 - why?

Thank you!
Comments welcome.